

VENTRAKL

Christian Hawkey

Poetry | \$17

Perfect-bound. 152 pp, 6.25 x 8 in.

ISBN: 978-1-933254-64-7

Distribution: SPD

Release date: October 1, 2010

Envisioned in the form of a scrapbook, **VENTRAKL** folds poetry, prose, biography, translation practices, and photographic imagery into an innovative collaboration with the 19th/early 20th century Austrian Expressionist poet Georg Trakl. Like Jack Spicer's *After Lorca*, translation is the central mode of composition in this book, and it is also the book's central theme, which Hawkey explores in a surprising array of different genres and modes of writing. What evolves is a candid and deeply felt portrait of two authors—one at the beginning of the 20th century, the other at the beginning of the 21st century, one living and one dead—wrestling with fundamental concerns: how we read texts and images, how we are influenced and authored by other writers, and how the practice of translation—including mistranslation—is a way to ornament and enrich the space between literature and life.

“Christian Hawkey’s poetry is landscape poetry in the true sense of landscape—not a segment of the Earth’s surface posing for its picture, but an open, undetermined space in which all kinds of crazy mental and physical things are going about their business simultaneously. What emerges is a portrait of a medium like the one we live in, with all its unexpectedness.” —JOHN ASHBERY

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Christian Hawkey is the author of *The Book of Funnels* (Wave Books, 2004) and the chapbook *HourHour* (Delirium Press, 2005). His second full-length collection, *Citizen Of*, was released by Wave Books in the Spring of 2007 and another chapbook, *Petitions for an Alien Relative*, has just been released by Hand Held Editions (Brooklyn, 2010). His translations from the German have appeared in *jubilat*, *Dichten #10*, *the Anthology New European Poetry*, and the *Chicago Review*. In 2008 he was a DAAD Artist-in-Berlin Fellow. He lives in Berlin and Brooklyn and is currently an Associate Professor at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York, where he teaches in the Humanities and Media Studies department, and in the Writing Program.

ABOUT UGLY DUCKLING PRESSE

Ugly Duckling Presse is a nonprofit art and publishing collective producing small to mid-size editions of new poetry, translations, lost works and artist books. For more about UDP, visit www.uglyducklingpresse.org

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From *Ventrakl*:

—Dear Walt, the verse orb is breaking.

If a scattered cinder beckons, if a white comet
zithers over our green necks

indecent as a lease
on the glands of Bach, we hum,

veil-light

awkward above our shining sternums.

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